

READ★PRAY★WONDER★PLAY

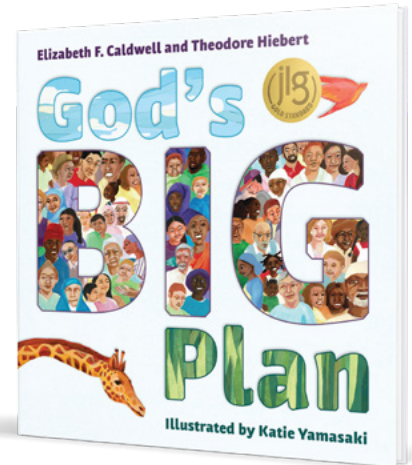
A GUIDE TO SHARING STORIES WITH CHILDREN

God's Big Plan

By Elizabeth F. Caldwell, Theodore Hiebert, & Katie Yamasaki

God's Big Plan is a creative retelling of the story of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9. As in the creation stories from Genesis 1 and 2, these early stories illustrate how God's people understood God's actions—the formation of the world and all that is in it, humankind, and the rich diversity that exists amongst all things. Newer biblical scholarship has emphasized that there is no mention of pride or punishment in the Babel story, contrary to how it has traditionally been interpreted. Rather, God has a bigger plan for God's people. That plan, or intention, is for differences and diversity, not only in the skies and seas, the plants and the creatures, but in people, their languages and location. As in Genesis 1, this is good.

Read the Note for Parents and Educators at the back of the book to more fully see the intention of the authors.



★ ★ WONDER TOGETHER ★ ★

- What do you think God's big plan might be as you look at the cover?
- What do you think it would be like for all of us to be the same as other people? What would be good about that? What might not be good?
- Why do you think this story is in the Bible?
- Notice that the book has two parts. What do you like about the second part of the book about our differences? Where do you see yourself in this story?
- Look at the pages of the second part of the book about our differences. For each difference, describe yourself—what language(s) do you speak? What breads do you eat? Where do you live? How do you worship?

★ ★ EXPLORE THE STORY ★ ★

- Draw a picture showing differences and diversity in God's creation.
- Talk together about what makes your family the same as others in your neighborhood, school, or church and what makes you different. Explore through conversation or crafts what you like about the differences.
- Build a tower as tall as you can out of building blocks or boxes. Imagine what it would be like if everyone lived in one place. Then use the blocks or boxes and make towns or houses. Imagine who might live in them.
- Choose one of the differences in the second part of the book and explore what is different from your own experience. For example, try learning a few phrases in another language, eating a food different than you usually eat, or researching another country's schools, homes, or places of worship.

PRAY

God of all creation, we praise you and thank you for your big plan of differences and diversity. Help us appreciate our own differences and those of others as they make us all part of your good creation. Amen.



THE
PC(USA)
STORE

DISCOVER MORE

www.pcusastore.com/FlyawayBooksGuides

★ ★ DIG DEEPER ★ ★

Children's picture books are a great way to explore differences and diversity. Check out a few of the books listed below or do a YouTube search for a read-along video version. Talk together about what differences are highlighted in the story and recall God's big plan for humankind.

- *Children Just Like Me: A New Celebration of Children around the World* (DK Children, 2016)
- *It's Okay to Be Different* by Todd Parr (Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2009)
- *It's OK to be Different* by Sharon Purtill (Dunhill Clare Publishing, 2019)
- *Just Ask! Be Different, Be Brave, Be You* by Sonia Sotomayor (Philomel Books, 2019)
- *No One Else like You* by Siska Goeminne (Flyaway Books, 2017)
- *People* by Peter Spier (Doubleday Books for Young Readers, 1980)
- *The Same but Different Too* by Karl Newson (Candlewick Press, 2020)
- *What If We Were All the Same!* by C. M. Harris (Purple Diamond Press, Inc, 2021)

Jesus befriended many different people who were not like him, and many who others didn't approve of because of their differences. Read one or more of the stories below. Talk together about what you might learn from Jesus' actions. You can also read these stories in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Flyaway Books, 2018). See references to the story Bible in parentheses.

- A woman anoints Jesus with expensive perfume: Mark 14:3-9, Luke 7:36-48 (The Thankful Woman, p. 234)
- A woman gives Jesus water to drink: John 4:1-32 (The Very Thirsty Woman, p. 236)
- Jesus sees Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-10 (The Short Man, p. 242)
- A woman confronts Jesus: Matthew 15:21-28 (A Canaanite Woman Does Not Give Up, p. 260)

MORE TO READ & DO

CLICK THE LINKS BELOW TO LEARN MORE

GOD'S BIG PLAN IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A BOARD BOOK!

- [Learn more!](#)

ADDITIONAL BOOKS THAT CELEBRATE GOD IN OUR LIVES

- [Where Are You Hiding, God?](#) by Elisabeth Zartl
- [A Very Big Problem](#), by Amy-Jill Levine, Sandy Eisenberg Sasso, and Annie Bowler
- [When God Gave Us Words](#), by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso and Darcy Day Zoells
- [God's Coming to Visit!](#) by Franz Hübner, Angela Glöcker, and Rea Grit Zielinski

Guide written by Meg Elliot Rift and created in partnership with PC(USA)'s initiative "[Around the Table](#)" (pcusa.org/aroundthetable).



THE
PC(USA)
STORE

DISCOVER MORE

www.pcusastore.com/FlyawayBooksGuides